



the
uncertainty
principle





UNIVERSITY OF
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FACULTY OF
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The Uncertainty Principle
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Cover image: UK Frederick & Katie Hayne, *Flat Impressions*, 2018 (detail).
Clay, plants, paint.

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the uncertainty principle

This exhibition, presented by members of the University of Canberra's Faculty of Arts & Design, is inspired by Heisenberg's famous phrase that points to the fuzziness in the natural world, and the impossibility of knowing in any certain way what things are, and how they operate. While we respect the specialised understanding of this concept, grounded as it is in physics, we read it as a metaphor for art practice. Artists are, we suggest, always feeling their way into new works, often not certain about what they are doing or what it means. Nonetheless, we keep going, hoping to keep finding new ways to make, see and understand – however uncertain or how partial that seeing and understanding might be. We explore these concepts in a range of media: artist books, video and sound art, works on paper, and both sculptural and interactive media.

The exhibition has been developed by the Centre for Creative and Cultural Research in the Faculty of Arts & Design. It is one of the Centre's aims to encourage and develop creative practice in research. In the exhibition submission process, therefore, each artist was required to write both an artist statement and a research statement. These are included in this catalogue to provide a framework for understanding the dual identity of their works: as the product of both creative and research practice.

Michael Jasper

On and around (the) El

2018. Table mounted piece: coloured acrylic, four colours, 38.7 x 22.5 x 22.8.

Research statement

This project inaugurates a multi year research project around the issues and problems revealed in modernist objective sculpture, including those of Anthony Caro, Ellsworth Kelly, and Donald Judd. The work picks up and continues strands of early twentieth century aesthetic investigations. One strand runs from the radial, pinwheel approach of DeStijl that voids the centre: van Doesburg and van Eesteren's counter-constructions exemplify this approach that empties or alternately fully charges the centre. Another strand engages layered planar space, denying frontality through an intensification of edges and corners in order to charge the periphery with forces in a manner best illustrated in axonometric or oblique views.

Three propositions organise the opening research, and suggest the theoretical, thematic, and methodological terms of reference of the project: first, the composition principles and spatial ideas rendered in neo-plasticist and objective painting have yet to be fully explored in sculpture; second, the concept and operation of El (L) figures delimit a portion of the conceptual profile of the space mode specific to modernist objective sculpture; third, the creation of theoretical plastic works contributes to investigating the problem.

In initial explorations, I study the creative latent potentials in modernist objective sculpture through studio-based plastic activity, making small-scaled sculptures as diagrams or theoretical models of specific aspects and issues associated with the larger study. In his analysis of the works of Anthony Caro, Michael Fried describes the sculptures with a set of terms that suggest in part the extent of ideas and formal relations at stake. These include: planarity; relation to the ground plane; obduracy; inside and outside; overhead and below; size and scale; literal, literalist, inert; non-situational; enclosure; edging. Each of these aspects could generate a series of works as a demonstration of the characteristics of a modernist plastic practice. Part of this larger research effort, *On and Around (the) El* considers the potentials contained in El (L) figures, both in 2D and 3D applications and with four colours. Actual realised and released form conditions and space effects are uncertain as consistent with the exhibition title and theme.

Photo credit: the artist



Michael Jasper | *On and around (the) El*

See van Doesburg and Eesteren's 1923 colour construction in the fourth dimension of space-time depicted in axonometrics as reproduced in *Towards Plastic Architecture*, in van Doesburg, T. 1974. *Joost Baljeu*. London: Studio Vista: 142-147.

Fried, M. 1998. Caro's Abstractness, in *Art and Objecthood. Essays and Reviews*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press: 189-192.

Shane Strange | *The end of laughter*

Colombo, JR. 1973. On Found Poetry (A FOUND INTRODUCTION), in *Open Poetry*, Ronald Gross & George Quasha (eds). www.ubu.com/papers/found_poetry.html

Jen Webb, Paul Munden, Paul Hetherington, John White | *The ontology of pain*

Cohen, E. 2000. The Animated Pain of the Body, in *The American Historical Review* 105.1 (February): 36-68.

Hayles, K. 1993. The Materiality of Informatics, in *Configurations: A Journal of Literature, Science and Technology* 1 (Winter): 147-70.

Scarry, E. 1985. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jen Webb | *Taking care of the pennies*

Kaufman, JC. and Sternberg, RL (eds). 2010. *The Cambridge Handbook of Creativity*, Cambridge University Press.

Lahire, B. 2010. The Double Life of Writers (trans Gwendolyn Wells), in *New Literary History* 41.2: 443-465.

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